

June 8, 2011

The Honorable Jim Marleau, Chairman Senate Health Policy Committee Michigan Senate P.O. Box 30036 Lansing, MI 48909-7536

Dear Chairman Marleau,

As you and the members of the Senate Health Policy committee consider House Bill 4350, I would like to submit the following information:

I currently serve as the Chairman of *Project Access*, in Kent County, Michigan. The local medical Society and Osteopathic Association created *Project Access* in 2004 to increase access for uninsured patients who resort to the expensive use of the Emergency Department for care. Since 2004, Project Access, and its small staff, has coordinated the gifted care of 400+ physicians to benefit thousands of patients. More than \$5.5 million in gifted health care has been coordinated. The gift of physician care is critical! This is work that only generous, compassionate physicians can donate. Many primary care physicians see patients who are in dire need of a specialist. Medical services like Orthopedics, Gynecology, Urology, Ophthalmology and General Surgery have resulted in patients returning to work, or at minimum, capable of seeking work.

Project Access patients would not be able to get this critical care unless physicians knew they were going to be insulated from liability. Many physicians do not participate because of the fear of being sued. Help physicians use their training and knowledge with all populations, by demonstrating, clearly, that they can provide this care without fear of legal consequences for volunteering to help others.

Thank you for your time and consideration with this important matter.

Sincerely,

Eric Bouwens, MD

Chairman

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